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ABSTRACT

In an attempt to understand nonreader attitudes toward the daily newspaper, 576 non-newspaper reading adults were queried in three waves about their reasons for avoiding newspapers. In the first wave, the major findings were that nonreaders avoid newspapers because of lack of time, preference for another news medium, newspaper cost, and lack of interest. In the second wave, typical nonreaders (those low in income and education, the young and the elderly) and atypical nonreaders (those high in income and education, and the middle-aged) were queried about a checklist of 15 avoidances developed from the first wave of interviews. Responses to the checklist were factor analyzed and reduced to five significant reasons nonreaders avoid newspapers: newspaper content, poor eyesight, lack of time, use of other media, and perceived newspaper bias. It was found that typical nonreaders avoid newspapers because of poor eyesight, while atypical nonreaders do not read because of lack of time and newspaper content. In the third wave, nonreaders were defined as those avoiding both daily and weekly newspapers. Four major factors were found to cause this group's avoidance of newspapers: perceived newspaper bias, avoidance of print, use of broadcast media, and lack of time. (Author/GW)

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Theory and Methodology Division

DAILY NEWSPAPER NON-READERS:
WHY THEY DON'T READ

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Daily Newspaper Non-Readers:

Why They Don't Read

Information on the daily newspaper non-reader is scarce. Only three major research efforts have been devoted exclusively to the study of non-newspaper reading adults. Two studies, 10 years apart, examined non-readers by their demographic characteristics.¹ The third study isolated socio-psychological characteristics as predictors of non-readership.²

Westley and Severin³ in a 1961-62 statewide probability sample of Wisconsin residents isolated demographic and socio-economic factors related to not reading newspapers. They found non-readers typically had low educational achievement (less than high school) and low incomes (less than \$5,000). The largest percentages of non-readers were among the very young (20's) and the very old (70's and above). Non-readers, Westley and Severin found, were more likely to live in rural areas and to have lived at their present residence for fewer than five years. Socially, non-readers were found to be isolated.

Ten years later, in a partial replication of Westley-Severin, Peprose

¹ Bruce H. Westley and Werner J. Severin, "A Profile of the Daily Newspaper Non-Reader," Journalism Quarterly, 41:45-50, 156 (Winter 1964).

Jeanne Penrose, David H. Weaver, Richard R. Cole and Donald Lewis Shaw, "The Newspaper Non-reader 10 years later: A Partial Replication of Westley-Severin," Journalism Quarterly, 51:631-638 (Winter 1974).

² John Clinton Schweitzer, "The Newspaper and Its Community: An Analysis of Non-readership." Unpublished Dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (1974).

³ Westley and Severin, op. cit.

et al.⁴ studied North Carolina residents in a state-wide study. They found the same demographic and socio-economic factors related to non-reading.

Schweitzer⁵, after studying non-readers in 1974, suggested that "traditional demographic analysis is insufficient to determine the reasons why persons are or are not readers." Schweitzer further stated that, "although some demographic and SES variables do have a power to predict readership individually, it is necessary to consider such variables in connection with other socio-psychological variables." Specifically, he analyzed non-readership in relation to the individual's orientation to the local community.

Schweitzer found non-readers less likely to be characterized by high community identification, geographic stability, home ownership, activeness in local voluntary organizations and frequent contact with neighbors and friends.

Schweitzer also found that "the constructs of alienation, localism-cosmopolitanism and internal-external control had little predictive power in differentiating readers from non-readers."

In a study of former newspaper subscribers, McCombs, Mullins and Weaver⁶ offered some insight into why some people avoid newspapers. In this 1974 study of adults in Indiana, North Carolina and California, McCombs et al. found people stopped taking the newspaper because of "poor service, lack of

⁴Penrose, Weaver, Cole and Shaw, op. cit.

⁵Schweitzer, op. cit. p.73.

⁶Maxwell E. McCombs, L.E. Mullins, and David H. Weaver, "Why People Subscribe and Cancel: A "Stop-Start" Survey of Three Daily Newspaper, American Newspaper Publishers Association News Research Bulletin No. 3, April 5, 1974. p.12.

time to read, the high cost of the newspaper, disinterest in the newspaper, too much advertising, the large size of the newspaper, the editorial stance of the newspaper and dissatisfaction with the news coverage."

Former subscribers are not necessarily non-readers of course. Some former subscribers might get a newspaper from the news stand, at a vending machine, or even from a neighbor. But because non-subscribers avoid newspapers through their major mode of distribution, it is felt they are closer to non-readers than readers.

While all four studies laid important foundations for understanding who are the non-readers, none directly pursued the question: "Why don't non-readers read newspapers?"

This study addresses that question. In an attempt to understand, explain and predict non-reader attitudes and behaviors toward the daily newspaper, 576 non-newspaper reading adults in nine cities and one rural county were queried in three waves of interviewing about their reasons for avoiding the daily newspaper. Their responses are presented in this study. In reality, this is three studies. The questionnaire design and analysis in the second and third waves are based on the findings from the previous waves of interviews.

Method, Wave I

Non-readers were interviewed in six northeastern United States cities. Five of the interview sites had populations of less than 25,000. One city was slightly above 100,000. Each of the cities had one local daily newspaper and from two to six external newspapers circulating daily. Four of the local dailies were afternoon papers. Circulations of the six local dailies ranged from 16,000 to 49,000. Half of the circulations were under 20,000.

Participants in the study were selected through probability random sampling methods. Five hundred newspaper readers and non-readers were interviewed at each location. Survey respondents first were asked: "How often do you read a daily newspaper?"

- "Never or seldom"
- "1 or 2 days a week"
- "Nearly every day"
- "Every day."

Respondents replying, "Never or seldom" were defined as non-readers.⁷ "Never" and "seldom" were used as the same response category to avoid some of the social undesirability bias that might have been introduced if only the response never had been used. It was felt that it would be easier for a respondent to acknowledge reading a newspaper on occasion (seldom) than to admit not reading a newspaper at all.

In these six cities, a total of 326 respondents were classified as non-readers:

⁷This examination of non-readers is only part of a larger newspaper readership study. The larger study which involved approximately 500 randomly selected adults per interview site, included questions on attitudes, "use and gratifications," readership of specific features and marketing and circulation information.

	City 1	City 2	City 3	City 4	City 5	City 6
% of Non-readers	8.6%	16.1%	13.6%	9.2%	11.6%	5.8%
N of Non-readers	(43)	(82)	(68)	(46)	(58)	(29)
Non-Penetration ⁸	8.7%	18.5%	27.4%	5.5%	8.0%	-.02%

Non-readership was compared with non-penetration for each survey area as a partial check on the validity of the individual samples. The non-penetration figures, though, can not be viewed as absolutes when comparing them with the percentage of non-readers in the six samples. The smallest geographic division available to compute non-penetration was the county. Only cities 4 and 6 represent a complete county. The other four cities represent one complete county plus a portion of another. Circulation figures were not available to determine non-penetration for those county portions.

Because non-readership and non-penetration can not be matched one for one, they were ranked from high to low and compared as ordinal data. Spearman's rho for the non-readership and non-penetration figures equals +.77, suggesting that the variation in the number of non-readers from city to city is a function of actual population variation, not the vagaries of the sampling procedures.

Respondents answering "Never or seldom" then were asked to evaluate their non-use of daily newspapers by the following question:

"People have many reasons for not reading a newspaper. Why do you seldom read a daily newspaper?"

Since the total number of non-readers in any one city was too small for any meaningful analysis, non-readers in the six cities were aggregated to obtain a composite picture of non-readers.

⁸ Source: American Newspaper Markets' Circulation '76-77.

$$\text{Non-Penetration} = 100\% - \left(\frac{\text{Circulation}}{\text{\# of Households}} \right).$$

Findings, Wave I

Table 1 lists the main reasons non-readers gave for not using a newspaper. The most common reasons were lack of time; use of another news medium; cost; and lack of interest in the contents. These four categories account for over two-thirds of the responses to the open-end question "Why do you seldom read a newspaper?"

Almost one-fifth of the non-readers cited lack of time as their reason for ignoring newspapers. Some of the specific responses were:

"I'm not home enough to spend time with a paper."

"I'm single and run around too much to have time to read a newspaper."

"I work full-time, plus I'm a housewife so I have little time to read."

Another eighteen percent of the non-readers indicated they prefer to use another medium (television, radio or magazine) for news and information.

This preference for another news medium may be because the person does not have the time newspapers require or the person really does not have an interest in reading newspapers. Or it may be a positive preference such as expressed by the traveling salesman. "I'm on the road a lot, so I get my news from radio."

Cost keeps 16 percent of the non-readers away from the newspaper. One respondent phrased this avoidance very succinctly: "I can't afford a paper."

Fifteen percent said lack of interest keeps them from the paper. An elderly man remarked, "I'm not interested. I don't care what's going on in the world."

The remaining third of non-readers blamed their health, circulation problems, language, newspaper content or dislike of reading when asked why they avoid newspapers.

One 80 year old woman in the health category responded, "I don't see well enough to read."

One non-reader, citing circulation problems, reported she doesn't read newspapers because she is "disgusted with the delivery service. They just wouldn't put it in the box," she said.

The six percent of the non-readers citing language problems were mostly foreign born and unable to speak or read English well.

The four percent citing newspaper content complained about the amount of advertising and the bias in the news.

Another two and a half percent confessed they just don't like to read.

TABLE 1

Main Reason for Not Reading Newspapers

<u>Reason</u>	<u>% of Non-Readers</u> ⁹
Lack of time	19.6
Preference for other information medium	17.8
Cost	16.0
Lack of interest	14.6
Health problem	8.5
Circulation problems	7.5
Language	5.7
Newspaper content	4.3
Don't like to read	2.5
Miscellaneous	3.6
	100.1

⁹ Percentages are based on a content analysis of 281 responses to the question, "Why do you seldom read a daily newspaper?" Forty-five non-readers were eliminated from the analysis because of non-usable responses.

Method, Wave II

Using open-end questions as the only research tool is too limiting. Even though they could respond in their own words, the open-end format did not necessarily tap all of the reasons non-readers might have for avoiding newspapers. Some persons have not thought about why they ignore newspapers, so asking open-end questions does not necessarily inspire them to offer fruitful responses.

To compensate for this limitation, new questions, written in a closed-end check-list format, were developed for the second wave of interviewing.

Developed from the responses to the open-end question described in Wave I, this check-list measured avoidances in six areas: interest in news and newspapers; time for and interest in reading; use of other media; newspaper content; newspaper bias; newspaper circulation. Specifically, the most frequent responses to the open-end query in Wave I were translated into a list of statements to which respondents could reply how much the statement applied to them.

The list was essentially an edited version of the non-readers own words in Wave I. The individual statements were selected with the intention of exhausting most of the possible reasons non-readers have for avoiding newspapers. It was also intended that the check-list be as specific as possible. For example in Wave I television, radio and newspaper were grouped under the one heading of media use, but the list in Wave II singled out each medium-- television, radio and newspaper are measured individually. This specification of individual items increased the comparability among non-readers and increased the breadth of the study.

In the second round of interviews one hundred and eighty-four non-readers were interviewed in two northeastern and one midwestern city. A total of 650 randomly selected respondents were interviewed at each survey site.

	<u>City A</u>	<u>City B</u>	<u>City C</u>
% of Non-readers	10.0%	6.3%	12.0%
N of Non-readers	(65)	(41)	(78)
Non-Penetration ¹⁰	10.9%	7.2%	8.1%

Spearman's rho equals +.50.

Non-readers were asked the following questions for Wave II:

"Here are some reasons that people have given for not reading a newspaper. For each reason tell me whether it applies to you a great deal, somewhat, or not at all.

...I don't have time to read

...I have no desire to read what's in the newspaper

...I get my news from television

...I get my news from radio

...I get my news from magazines

...I'm not interested in keeping up with the latest events

...I disagree with editorial stands

...I don't want to read bad news

...There is too much advertising

...I don't like to read

...My eyesight is bad

¹⁰ Source: American Newspaper Markets' Circulation '76-77
 Non-Penetration = $100\% - \left(\frac{\text{Circulation}}{\text{\# of Households}} \right)$.

- ...Newspapers cost too much
- ...I can't get the newspaper home delivered
- ...Newspapers don't print the truth
- ...Newspapers are biased.

Findings, Wave II

Table 2 summarizes the newspaper avoidances which apply to the non-reader "a great deal". Using broadcast media is the main reason non-readers avoid the daily paper. Approximately 60 percent of the non-readers reported use of television is very much the reason they don't use newspapers. Slightly more than half of the non-readers said they get their news from radio.

Lack of time and desire are also important reasons non-readers don't use newspapers. Over one-third said they don't have time while one-fifth admitted they have no desire to read papers.

In rank order, the remaining avoidances are: newspaper cost (20%); dislike of reading (15%); amount of advertising (13%); bias (12%); poor eyesight (12%); disinterest in current events (10%); not wanting bad news (10%); use of magazines (9%); disagreement with editorials (8%); unavailability of home delivery (8%); newspapers don't print the truth (5%).

When the open-end responses in Wave I are compared with the closed-end responses in Wave II, the consistency of the responses is high. Lack of time, preference for another news medium and lack of interest are still at the top of the list. Cost which was the third most frequent response to the open-end question in Wave I is the fifth most frequent response in Table 2. Overall, the tables show that whether non-readers are asked an open-end question or are presented with a checklist of responses, they are consistent in their reasons for avoiding the daily newspaper.

Table 2

Reasons Non-Readers Avoid the Daily Newspaper

	<u>Percent saying Applies Great Deal</u>	<u>Factor 1:** Content</u>	<u>Factor 2: Media</u>	<u>Factor 3: Eyesight</u>	<u>Factor 4: Bias</u>	<u>Factor 5: Time</u>
Don't have time	34.5 (3) *	.05	.08	-.04	.18	.67
No desire	20.5 (4)	.60	.08	.17	-.02	.35
Get news from TV	59.3 (1)	-.32	.68	.05	.15	.03
Get news from radio	52.6 (2)	.13	.73	-.005	-.09	.17
Get news from magazines	9.4 (12)	.03	.68	-.08	-.06	-.09
Disinterested in current events	10.5 (10)	.68	-.003	.07	.02	.07
Disagree with editorials	7.7 (13)	.64	-.02	-.09	.18	.04
Don't want bad news	10.0 (11)	.72	-.07	-.06	.23	-.16
Too many ads	13.0 (7)	.60	-.008	.15	.37	-.11
Don't like to read	15.2 (6)	.14	-.06	.64	.13	.43
Eyesight is bad	12.1 (9)	-.07	-.02	.82	-.05	-.03
Newspaper cost	19.8 (5)	.16	-.002	.50	.14	-.40
No home delivery	7.6 (14)	-.01	.008	-.03	.12	-.59
Newspapers don't print truth	4.8 (15)	.23	-.05	.16	.82	-.02
Newspapers are biased	12.3 (8)	.22	-.01	-.06	.85	.05

*(Rank Order)

**Five meaningful factors accounting for 57% of the variance were extracted. Percent of variance accounted for by each factor was: Content 21%; Media 11%; Eyesight 9%; Bias 8%; Time 7%.

To extract additional meaning from the checklist of 15 avoidances, they were factor analyzed. The factor analysis reduced the 15 avoidances to five significant areas: 1) Newspaper content; 2) Use of other media; 3) Poor eyesight; 4) Bias; 5) Lack of time.¹¹

Table 2 shows the individual avoidances composing these five areas. Newspaper content consists of lack of desire to read the contents of a daily newspaper; disagreement with editorials; not wanting to read bad news; and too much advertising in the newspaper.

Use of other media specifically refers to using television, radio and magazines for news and information. Bias is defined by the statements newspapers don't print the truth and newspapers are biased. Poor eyesight and lack of time are defined by those individual avoidances.

What are the relationships of age, income, education and sex to these five factors? To answer these questions, five indices were constructed. Each index was created by summing the individual variables loading high on each of the five factors. The indices were dichotomized at the median. Scores above the median were defined as major; scores below the median were defined as minor reasons non-readers avoid the daily paper.

When analyzing non-readers by their age, education and income a new question emerged. If non-readers are disproportionately the young and the elderly and low on the education and income scales, who are the non-

¹¹The varimax rotated factor matrix was used for this factor analysis.

readers high in income and education and falling in the middle-age categories and why are they avoiding newspapers when previous research predicts they should be reading them. Typically non-newspaper reading adults are young and old, poor and under-educated. So who are these adults atypical of this description?

Atypical non-readers hover between two disparate social groups. Because they don't read newspapers, they are associated with young and elderly low income, low educated people. Because atypical non-readers have high incomes, educations and are middle-aged, they are also associated with people who do read newspapers. In other words, the atypical non-readers' peer group or reference group consists of newspaper reading adults. Chances are atypical non-readers are exposed to newspaper readers in the office, on the tennis court and in their middle-class neighborhoods.

The atypical non-reader's peer group of newspaper readers conforms to society's norms while typical non-newspaper readers do not. Typical non-readers not only avoid newspapers, but they also avoid the voting booths, and civic and social participation. Typical non-readers are generally socially different, atypical non-readers are not. What this really means is atypical non-readers should really be more amenable to the idea of reading a daily newspaper since their peer group reads.

A closer look at Westley-Severin and Penrose et al. reveals they too had a large number of atypical non-readers in their samples. The reason for their presence was not determined in these earlier studies. This study, though, will attempt to explain why these persons who are expected to be newspaper readers are in the non-reading group.

Table 3 compares the percentage of typical and atypical non-readers across the Westley-Severin, Penrose et al. and Poindexter studies. When analyzed by age, the percentage of atypical non-readers is fairly consistent across the three studies. In the Westley-Severin study, 60 percent of the non-readers were atypical. In the Penrose et al. study, 64 percent were atypical and in the Poindexter study, 60 percent were atypical. It should be noted that age is measured differently in the Poindexter study than in the other two studies. Westley-Severin and Penrose et al. used 20's, 30's, 40's, etc. bracketing while Poindexter used 18 to 25, 26 to 35, 36 to 45, etc. age groupings.

An examination of non-readers by education shows that two-fifths of the non-readers in the Westley-Severin study were atypical; over a quarter in the Penrose et al. study; and almost three-fifths in the Poindexter study were atypical.

Because education was measured the same across all three studies, the large differences cannot be attributed to the measuring instrument. The differences do suggest a significant increase in non-reading among higher educated groups. Regional differences might also account for variations when atypical non-readers are examined by education.

Analysis by income reveals a large discrepancy between the previous two studies and the present study. This can be explained by differences in income measurement. Westley and Severin and Penrose et al. asked for income of the household head. Poindexter measured family income. In Westley-Severin, 35

TABLE 3

A PERCENTAGE COMPARISON OF TYPICAL AND ATYPICAL NON-READERS
IN WESTLEY-SEVERIN, PENROSE ET AL. & POINDEXTER

	<u>Westley-Severin</u>	<u>Penrose et al.</u>	<u>Poindexter</u>
	61-62	71-72	76-77
Total Non-readers	143	341	506
<u>By Age</u>			
Typical	40% (57)	36% (124)	31% (158)
Atypical	60% (86)	64% (221)	69% (348)
<u>By Education</u>			
Typical	60% (83)	73% (254)	41% (205)
Atypical	40% (55)	27% (92)	59% (294)
<u>By Income</u>			
Typical	65% (90)	58% (178)	25% (118)
Atypical	35% (48)	42% (130)	75% (354)

percent were atypical non-readers; in Penrose et al., 42 percent were atypical; and in the Poindexter analysis, 75 percent were atypical.

While differences in the number of atypical non-readers vary from study to study, the fact that a sizeable percentage of atypical non-readers exists in all three studies is consistent. Atypical non-readers have always been present, but why they are present has until now not been determined.

To answer this subsidiary research question--why don't atypical non-readers read the daily newspaper--non-readers were dichotomized into typical and atypical non-reader groups. These typical and atypical non-reader dichotomies were analyzed to determine if differences exist in their reasons for avoiding the daily newspaper.

Typical non-readers are operationally defined as between the ages of 18 and 25 and above 65. They have an income of less than \$5,000 and have not gone beyond high school. Atypical non-readers, on the opposite end of the scale, have a family income above \$5,000 and at least a high school degree. Atypical non-readers are between the ages of 26 and 65.

When dichotomized into typical and atypical non-reader age groups, atypical non-readers cited lack of time as a major factor more frequently than typical non-readers. (See Table 4.) Sixty-six percent of the atypical non-readers said time is the main reason they avoid newspapers while only 48 percent of the typical non-readers cited time as a major factor. The differences in these two groups can probably again be attributed to the large percentage of elderly in the typical non-reader group. The elderly, retired from full-time employment, may have more free time than other age groups.

The difference between typical and atypical non-readers when analyzed by income was striking. Atypical non-readers overwhelmingly reported lack of time is a major reason they do not read the dailies. Over 70

TABLE 4

Reason	1 Income		2 Age		3 Education	
	Typical % (N=35)	Atypical % (N=105)	Typical % (N=48)	Atypical % (N=122)	Typical % (N=61)	Atypical % (N=109)
Time is Major	31.4	71.4	47.9	65.6	52.5	65.1
Time is Minor	68.6	28.6	52.1	34.4	47.5	34.9
	p<.001		p<.06		N.S.	
	(N=35)	(N=103)	(N=46)	(N=120)	(N=60)	(N=106)
Content is Major	34.3	66.0	43.5	62.5	55.0	58.5
Content is Minor	65.7	34.0	56.5	37.5	45.0	41.5
	p<.002		p<.05		N.S.	
	(N=35)	(N=105)	(N=49)	(N=123)	(N=62)	(n=110)
Poor Eyesight is Major	31.4	16.2	34.7	17.1	37.1	13.6
Poor Eyesight is Minor	68.6	83.8	65.3	82.9	62.9	86.4
	N.S.		p<.03		p<.001	

¹ Typical income defined as under \$5,000. Atypical income defined as over \$5,000.

² Typical age defined as 18 to 25 and over 65. Atypical age defined as 26 to 65.

³ Typical education defined as less than High School. Atypical education defined as High School plus.

percent of the atypical non-readers as compared with 31 percent of the typical non-readers placed significant weight on this factor. (See Table 4.)

While age and income were significantly related to time, education was not. The proportion of non-newspaper readers in the typical and atypical education categories was not significantly different.

Atypical non-readers when analyzed by income were more likely to report content plays a major role in their avoiding newspapers. As Table 4 shows, 66 percent of the atypical non-readers cited content as compared with 34 percent of typical (low income) non-readers.

Differences also appeared when content was explored through the typical and atypical dichotomies defined by age.

As shown in Table 4, atypical non-readers were more likely to report content is a major factor in their avoiding newspapers. Over three-fifths of atypical non-readers said content is an important reason while only two-fifths of the typical non-readers reported content.

Surprisingly, education was not related to the content factor. It was expected that atypical non-readers (high education) would be more cognizant of newspaper content. This was not the case. Atypical and typical non-readers equally reported content as a factor in their newspaper avoidance.

When poor eyesight was analyzed by typical and atypical non-readers as defined by education, again differences appeared. Typical non-readers outnumbered atypical non-readers in reporting poor eyesight as a major avoidance. Thirty-seven percent of the typical non-readers as compared with almost 14 percent of the atypical non-readers reported poor eyesight is a major reason for avoiding the daily newspaper. (See Table 4.)

Poor eyesight is more likely to be the domain of typical non-readers when analyzed by age. As Table 4 shows, more than one-third of the typical non-readers

reported poor eyesight is a major avoidance while less than one-fifth of the atypical non-readers said poor eyesight is a major problem. Again, this difference can be attributed to the large percentage of elderly respondents in the typical non-reader category.

When poor eyesight was analyzed by income, there were no significant differences between the typical and atypical income dichotomies.

Method, Wave III

What happens to the newspaper avoidances if the operational definition of non-reader is changed? Will atypical non-readers still be among the non-reading segment of the population if a stricter definition is used? Wave III answers these questions.

In this wave, non-readers were defined as those persons never or seldom reading a daily and a weekly newspaper. Waves I and II had operationalized non-readers as those persons never or seldom reading a daily newspaper only.

For this wave, non-readers were interviewed in a northeastern rural county. Five small communities and surrounding rural areas adjacent to a city of approximately 31,000 people compose the interviewing area. The two major dailies, one bi-weekly and four weeklies, available in this rural county, have circulations ranging from a low of 3,200 to a high of 42,000.

Eight hundred and twenty-one readers and non-readers, randomly selected from the county telephone book, were interviewed in their homes. There is a 93 percent penetration of telephones and 8 percent of the phones are unlisted.

Findings, Wave III

Eight percent of the respondents can be strictly categorized as non-readers. They read neither dailies nor weeklies. Fourteen percent of the respondents said they never read a daily newspaper but do read a weekly. This group has been labeled the weekly reader only. Twelve percent read a daily paper but never touch a weekly. The majority of the respondents, 66 percent, reported reading both a daily and a weekly. (See Table 5). The focus of this analysis will be on the first group, the non-reader of any newspaper, daily or weekly.

Table 5

	%
Non-Reader	8
Daily Reader Only	12
Weekly Reader Only	14
Reader of Both	66
	100%
	(821)

These non-readers will be examined by their socio-economic levels as defined by their typical or atypical grouping. This group will be compared with the non-daily reader as operationalized in Waves I and II to determine if the reasons they do not read are identical to the reasons the non-daily reader avoids the newspaper.

Table 6 shows this strict definition of non-readers is compatible with the operationalization of non-reader used in the first and second waves. Typically, non-readers of daily and weekly newspapers are more likely to be found among the lowest socio-economic levels and among the youngest and oldest adults.

Non-readers are disproportionately among the low income, poorly educated and young and elderly, but numerically non-readers are more prevalent on the upper ends of the socio-economic scale. Even when using this very strict definition, this atypical non-reader--educated, middle aged, middle and upper income--is still highly visible among adults who do not read daily or weekly newspapers. Final analysis of why this atypical non-reader reads neither a daily nor a weekly, will be explored when the complete data base is available.

Table 6

	Income ¹		Age ²		Education ³	
	Typical % (N=127) ²	Atypical % (N=59)	Typical % (N=240)	Atypical % (N=566)	Typical % (N=211)	Atypical % (N=606)
Non-Reader ⁴	14	6	12	7	13	6
Daily Reader ⁵	9	12	13	11	9	13
Weekly Reader ⁶	24	12	18	13	21	12
Reader of Both ⁷	53	70	57	69	57	69
	p < .001		p < .01		p < .01	

¹Typical income defined as under \$5,000. Atypical income defined as over \$5,000.

²Typical age defined as 18 to 25 and over 65. Atypical age defined as 26 to 65.

³Typical education defined as less than high school. Atypical education defined as high school plus.

⁴Non-reader never or seldom reads any daily or weekly newspaper.

⁵Daily reader reads only a daily and never a weekly.

⁶Weekly reader never or seldom reads a daily newspaper but does read a weekly newspaper with some regularity. This operational definition partially replicates the definition in Waves I and II.

⁷Reader of both reads both a daily and a weekly with some regularity.

The check-list of avoidances used in the second wave was partially replicated in the research design and analysis of this wave. The two waves differ in that the order in which the avoidances were asked was rotated and three redundant avoidances were eliminated.

The avoidances which are greatly responsible for non-readers ignoring daily and weekly newspapers are listed in Table 7. Again, use of television and radio for news is most often mentioned as main reasons non-readers do not read newspapers. When the responses in this wave are compared with the previous wave, it becomes apparent that the avoidances of non-daily readers are very similar to the avoidances of non-daily and weekly readers.¹² A perfect correlation would have indicated that these two types of non-readers are the same but further analysis of the strict non-readers indicates they are somewhat of a different breed.

In order to better comprehend the differences between these two groups of non-readers, the 12 avoidances were factor analyzed. Factor analysis reduced the 12 avoidances to four significant areas: 1) Bias 2) Print Avoidance 3) Broadcast Media Use 4) Lack of Time.¹³ These clusters are consistent with but still different from the findings in Wave II.

Table 7 shows the individual avoidances loading high on the four factors. Bias consists of too much advertising in the newspaper; newspapers are not truthful; newspapers are biased.

Print Avoidance, a new factor, consists of lack of desire to read the contents of a daily newspaper; not wanting to read bad news; don't like to read.

¹²Spearman's rho = +.76

¹³The varimax rotated factor matrix was used for this factor analysis.

Table 7

Reasons Non-Readers Avoid Daily and Weekly Newspapers

	Percent saying Applies Great Deal	Factor 1:** Bias	Factor 2: Print Avoidance	Factor 3: Broadcast Media Use	Factor 4: Time
No Desire	17.4 (9)*	.05	<u>.82</u>	.05	.15
Get news from TV	51.5 (1)	.08	.12	<u>.76</u>	-.24
Get news from radio	48.5 (2)	.09	.00	<u>.89</u>	.17
Get news from magazines	14.7 (11)	.37	-.49	-.26	.13
Don't like bad news	15.2 (10)	.16	<u>.74</u>	-.05	-.02
Too many ads	28.8 (3)	<u>.71</u>	.36	-.08	-.12
Don't like to read	19.1 (7)	.22	<u>.76</u>	.06	-.04
Eyesight is bad	20.6 (6)	-.16	-.11	.31	-.51
Newspaper cost	18.2 (8)	.54	.09	.33	-.08
Newspapers are not truthful	12.7 (12)	<u>.75</u>	.08	.11	.06
Newspapers are biased	20.9 (5)	<u>.85</u>	.00	-.03	.08
Don't have time	26.1 (4)	-.12	-.05	.11	<u>.89</u>

*(Rank Order)

** Four meaningful factors accounting for 62% of the variance were extracted. The percent of variance accounted for by each meaningful factor was: Bias, 24%; Print Avoidance 15%; Broadcast Media Use 13%; Time 10%.

Broadcast Media Use is a more refined version of the factor which emerged in Wave II. This factor refers specifically to use of television and radio for news information. In the previous wave, magazine use had also clustered with these items.

Lack of Time, found in Wave II, also factored in this analysis.

The effect of the stricter definition of non-reader in this wave is apparent in the examination of the factor analysis. This group of people--turned off to reading any kind of newspaper--has caused a new factor, print avoidance to emerge and one variable, use of magazines, previously found in the media factor to be negatively related to the broadcast cluster. A preliminary analysis of these findings suggests that this non-reader group is distinguished from the daily newspaper non-reader mostly by its completely turned-off attitude toward reading.

How different are typical and atypical non-readers in their avoidances when this stricter definition is used? Why are highly educated, middle aged, middle and upper income adults still among those not reading any kind of newspaper? Why this atypical non-reader reads neither a daily nor a weekly, will be analyzed when the complete data base is available.

Summary and Implications

These findings point to the need to recognize there is not a homogenous non-reading segment in the circulation area. Regardless of how non-readers are defined, there are two subgroups in the non-reader population: one typical of non-readers; the other atypical. Typical non-readers are expected to not read and they don't. Atypical non-readers are expected to read but don't.

Atypical non-readers report they don't read because of lack of time and newspaper content. The finding that middle-aged, upper income, highly educated adults ignore the daily newspaper because of "lack of time" and "dissatisfaction with content" suggests the direction for the next phase of research on the non-reader. The next phase of research should focus on determining the true meaning, in the minds of the non-readers, of these avoidances. Are non-readers really rationalizing about why they don't read or are they literally lacking the time to devote to newspapers? Exactly what kinds of content are atypical non-readers objecting to? If the various meanings behind the "time" and "content" avoidances could be decoded, the definitions could be used to construct indices which would better tap what's really behind non-readers avoidance of the daily newspaper.

The atypical non-reader subgroup, discovered in this study, is really not a new phenomenon. This subgroup was present 16 years ago in the Westley-Severin study. It was present ten years later in the Penrose et al. study. This is the first study, however, to examine this group and explain why it exists. The atypical non-reader because of his or her middle age, high income, and education, is not expected to be in the non-reader group. In contradiction with this expectation, the atypical non-reader is a viable member of the non-reader community. Determining why this contradiction exists underscores the significance of this analysis of the daily newspaper non-reader community, and it also questions the validity of writing off the non-reader group as a lost cause as previous studies have suggested.